

(Mr. Middleton, United Kingdom)

delegations of the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany, outlines many of the detailed procedures we consider necessary in order adequately to ensure the compliance of States with a chemical weapons treaty.

Although this subject is not addressed in our own paper, the United Kingdom can certainly accept the setting up of national committees to oversee internal compliance as proposed in document CD/294 but a decision to set up such a committee would in our view lie with each State party. We would also reiterate our view that greater emphasis should be put on international verification measures controlled by the consultative committee. The text of a convention should emphasize in this connection the need for effective measures for systematic inspection of the destruction of stockpiles and production facilities. The Soviet draft mentions quotas for such inspections. The distinguished representative of the Soviet Union touched on this point this morning, but my delegation would still welcome further clarification. It seems to us that depending on circumstances, representatives of the consultative committee may need to maintain a permanent presence at destruction sites and a "quota" may not be sufficient. Furthermore, we believe that a convention should provide for challenge inspection of general industrial chemical facilities which have a capacity for chemical weapons production, even if they are not declared as chemical weapons plants, and also for measures to check the declared volumes of accumulated stockpiles. It would also, in our view, be necessary to agree on the machinery by which States parties could assess, within the framework of the consultative committee, whether the explanations of an accused party which declines on-site inspection were sufficiently convincing.

As outlined in our own paper on verification, we consider that the consultative committee should be a permanent body established at the entry into force of the chemical weapons convention. Such an arrangement would help to ensure early investigation by the Committee of alleged contraventions of the treaty. We note that the Soviet Union has refrained from elaborating on many of the functions and powers of the consultative committee. It is, for instance, not altogether clear from document CD/294 whether, in cases of suspected violations, requests for information and for on-site inspection can be made to the consultative committee itself, so that its representatives might carry out inspections on behalf of one or more States parties, or whether the role of the Committee would be limited simply to passing on bilateral requests for such visits. In our view, only after the consultative committee has itself been directly involved in making at least one request for on-site inspection, and these requests have been refused, should the matter be taken to the Security Council of the United Nations.

I apologize if my remarks have seemed to some delegations excessively technical, but my delegation believes that we have reached the stage where detailed discussion of such points is appropriate and necessary if the progress we are all seeking is to be achieved. My delegation would welcome comments on our own ideas and look forward to a response from the Soviet delegation to the comments we have made on its paper. We shall also study with care the detailed statement made by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union this morning. We look forward to a further exchange of views in the Working Group.